

THEMATIC CONSIDERATIONS OF DISPLACEMENT AND AMITAV

GHOSH'S THE CIRCLE OF REASON, THE SHADOW

LINES, THE GLASS PALACE AND THE SEA OF POPPIES

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ABSTRACT

In this article an attempt is made to reconnoitre the sway of dislocation on the political, social, psychological, economic and cultural lives of characters of Amitav Ghosh novels. His approach towards displacement implicates in itself the feelings of the characters results in the form of belongingness and alienation. The characters of his novels reflect their gratitude towards home, nation, border and language. These elements can be referred as the thematic considerations of displacement. Thematic considerations of displacement that hold an undeniable impact upon individual are assimilated as they are the important part of the thinking and living of the characters of Amitav Ghosh's novels selected for this study.

KEYWORDS: Displacement, Home, Nation, Border, Language, Amitav Ghosh

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INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of displacement refers to the corporeal movement that may be the consequence of transference from one's own dwelling or terra firma to the new alien land. The whys and wherefores of displacement may be servitude or captivity, incursion and settlement or a consequence of willing or unwilling movement. In displacement, the sense of self is generally in quandary due to conscious and unconscious intermingling of two cultures- indigenous and supposedly new culture model. In the displacement, an individual tries to find his individuality or the space of self in the new situation and if failed several issues of displacement arouse.

In his novels, Amitav Ghosh has unremittingly employed the notion of displacement and numerous other issues allied with it as – border or nation, colonization, space, language, unhousedness, encounter of cultures and rootlessness, referred as the thematic considerations of displacement.

The word thematic considerations refers to the issues or complexities that develops in any diasporic individual or masses. These concerns surface from their adjustment problems or in the process of being accustomed with the alien place. The impending forms of identification namely race, religion, language, culture, history and the nation get disturbed with the concept of displacement. The various concepts such as space, home, nation, culture, language and borders are such terms which by default is being debriefed to the diasporic individuals or groups in their span of displacement. These concepts will be dealt in the chapter in reference to the characters of Amitav Ghosh's selected novels for this study.

Home

The concept of home is undisputedly the most important in context to displacement. Outlying from their home and the roots the feeling of homelessness arise. Guruprasad S Y said, “Nostalgia/ memory and the theme of identity and lost home, play an important role which explores the theme of an original home.” It is the commemorations of their home that haunt them and yearning for home cultivates. Sensitivity for home is one of the most crucial aspect of diasporic life. Thus, the concept of home, homelessness is very much prominent in displaced people. As David Brooks in his *Diasporic Identities and Empire: Cultural Contentions and Literary Landscapes* suggested,

The mind journeys faster across boundaries of space and time. Displaced people do shuttle across these boundaries faster than the speed of light with the long cherished memories of their homeland.

The longing for home, the possible return to home and their desire to develop home at new place, what we aptly describe as ‘imaginary homelands’, ‘motherland’, or ‘home’ have well been exemplified with the help of fiction. Ghosh’s novels well delineate the feelings for home, relationship between the diasporic community and the aliened land and transnationality of home. Both the approaches towards home, like yearning for home and ability to make home away from home is the characteristic features of the characters of his novels. In most of his novels, characters are able to come out of their diasporic anxiety with the help of their ability to adjust in a new land by their efficacious assignation in tantalising pursuit for the family in transnational locations.

Amitav Ghosh’s first novel *The Circle of Reason* is the story of the victims of history who are forced into exile by incidents beyond their control. Basavraj S. Naikar in *Indian English Literature, Vol.7* states:

The Circle of Reason, one of the novels of Amitav Ghosh occupies a unique place in the field of postcolonial diasporic life by depicting the condition of people with lost home who are displaced, have become migrant in search of their livelihood. The novelist foregrounds in the novel the various socio-economic problems faced by the Indian diaspora abroad due to illegal migration.

The *Circle of Reason* demarcates about migration, diasporic feeling, and rootlessness. The characters in the novel does not belong to any place but are constrained to travel and form new habitat to cope with loneliness and sense of void that surface due to displacement. In real sense all and sundry is away from their roots. The concept of home itself is a matter of qualm, there is nothing in this novel that can ordinarily be called a “home”.

Uncertainty towards the place of origin or destination can be marked as the prominent feature of this novel. The characters in the novel are disposed to travel in general. It goes back and forth from Bangladesh to Calcutta, then Middle East to Kerala. The story moves in very indeterminate air. This perplexing environment does not allow them to feel stability of home in their life. The novel can be called an eternal chronicle of restlessness, uncertainty and change. The main character, Alu, himself is a nomadic character who came to Lalpukur, at his uncle’s place after losing his parents. And this may be treated as the beginning of the journey as he moved to Calcutta, Al Ghazira, and Middle East. Throughout the novel he has been disposed to journey, without having any longing for home.

Balram himself belonged to East Bengal (Dhaka) and moved to Lalpukur at the time of partition. He made his dwelling in Lalpukur and tried to settle himself there. “His was the only family which owned land in the area.”(20). The other characters, like, Kulfi, Chunni, Karthamma, Prof Samuel and many others find their dwelling at Ras.

Lalpukur itself as a place belongs to diasporic person. Balram narrated about the dwellers of Lalpukur as "Most of the villagers were refugees from the east." (TCR, 20) As most of the villagers were refugees, they are in agony of losing their home. They engross all their vigor in discerning what they have lost, how they have become almost have-nots. They have the memory of the rich and lavish life left over in the other part of the border. The emptiness and miserability of their new life made them melancholic. "people of Lalpukur were too melancholy, vomited out of their native soil years ago in another carnage, and dumped hundreds of miles away, they had no anger left. Their only passion was memory; a longing for a land where the green was greener, the rice whiter the fish bigger than boats." (Ghosh 59). The reminiscence and moaning of lost home has snatched away all their saps of lives. Lalpukur "is nothing but a dumping-ground for the refuse from tyrants' frenzies" (Ghosh 61).

Thus, in *The Circle of Reason*, Amitav Ghosh employed three approaches to deal with the concept of home. The first approach refers to the journey of diaspora. With the character of Alu, Ghosh has depicted the journey of Alu. The second approach refers to the characters who belonged to diaspora but find their home at new place. Balram, and other characters were depicting this. The third approach referred to the melancholy and agony involved with the loss of home. The people of Lalpukur are associated with this agony.

The Shadow Lines reintroduces us with the old theme of the desire for home and belonging and the pain associated with uprooting and disjunction. *Diasporic Identities and Empire: Cultural Contentions and Literary Landscapes* edited by David Brook states:

"Amitav Ghosh dwells at length in his novels on the concepts of home and homelessness. In *The Shadow Lines* almost all the characters feel homeless in one way or another."

The feeling for home, and unhomeliness is the rudimentary phenomenon that thwarts the life of the characters of *The Shadow Lines*. Leela Gandhi expressed akin view in *Post-Colonial Theory*, "diasporic thought finds its apotheosis in the ambivalent, transitory, culturally contaminated and borderline figure of the exile, caught in a historical limbo between home and the world" (132) is also particularly relevant. The feeling of home unveils more in the case of cross cultural connotation. This cross cultural contamination and incongruity is well revealed by the characters of novel belonging to two generations of migrant women – grandmother and Ila. Both Tha'mma and Ila have diverse genera of intricacies and sensitivity towards home though neither of the two has real home other than the fabricated one for the former and the abandoned one for the latter.

Tha'mma, the protagonist lady of the novel, has dilemmatic perception towards motherland or home and place of birth. She was torn apart in this conflicting situation. She was born in Dhaka in 1902, part of the pre-partitioned Indian Subcontinent. Her childhood passed in 'a big joint family, with everyone living and eating together' (SL 121). As her Jethamoshai says, "Once you start moving you never stop" (SL, 215), so it happens to her. Tha'mma, lost her home forever after her marriage and service of her husband at Myanmar. Then she moved Calcutta after her husband's death, which was then un-partitioned. After the partition, she remained in India, considering India to be her home country. This could not let her go to the home of her birth place though her birth certificate shows Dhaka as her birth place. In this situation her sense of 'home' begins to be problematic. She is unable to find a suitable word to reflect her situation. The dilemma about the homeland and foreign land is so vague in her context, that she is always confused.

On the other hand, Ghosh has projected Ila as transnational, race- neutral, gender free global home. This feeling of Ila's diasporic dislocation liberates her from any essential idea of home. Bill Ashcroft et al's comment made in *The Empire Writes Back* need to be implemented here "Diaspora does not simply refer to geographical dispersal but also to the vexed questions of identity, memory and home which such displacement produces" (217-218). She says while playing with the narrator, 'We can choose to build a house wherever we like' (SL 70). She, in contradiction to Tha'mma, does not struggle the migrant sensibility to find accommodation and alliterations, but a rootless, careless one. She never cares for the absence of the idea of home in her life, nor bothers to find any alternative. She, on the surface level, refused Indian values though was not able to adopt the free spirit of London. Her cravings for freedom comes in conflict with her rootedness to any specific place: "Do you see now why I've chosen to live in London? . . . It's only because I want to be free . . . free of your bloody culture and free of all of you" (SL 87). In the course of the novel we find Ila's difficulties in coping with Western life. Her situation of rootless and lost is nicely depicted by Alpana Neogy: "Physical relocation is just not enough. A change of perspective, perhaps a shadow of a line, needs to be traversed in order to make 'home' out of a state of exile" (Kapadia 220).

In *The Glass Palace*, Amitav Ghosh dealt the concept of home in a different manner. Various characters of the novel, projected views towards home differently. At one place, he dealt with exilic condition of king and queen of Burma and their longing memory of home, the Glass Palace in Burma. They could never consider 'Outram House' as their home and always eerie towards their memories of Burma, their homeland. As a colonial subjects they suffer from a sense of longing for homeland and suffer most of their lives in displaced location.

But at the same time, it is not the feeling of longing memory of home or feeling of homelessness, for Dolly and Raj Kumar, but adjustment and making a new home at new place. Ayesha Iqbal Vishwamohan stated, "In *The Glass Palace*, Ghosh .presents a sets of characters who are at home everywhere." In reference to Raj Kumar adaptability and ability to make home Ayesha Iqbal Vishwamohan in her book *Post liberalization Indian Novels in English: Politics of Global Reception* mentioned:

In *The Glass Palace*, Ghosh's focus on the mobile contours of home continues. It is primarily the story of an orphan with herculean tenacity and endurance, by virtue of which he forsakes the past, heals the pain of dislocation and adapts to various homes transnationally. He moves from nostalgia to follow on changing identities and establishing new relationships.

In case of both, Dolly and Raj Kumar, they ironically appropriated home to the place of exile or displacement and they have an allegiance to the nation of destination. Raj Kumar as an orphan boy came to Mandalay from Chittagong. His spirit motivates him to establish himself at new place. He not only became a successful person at this new place but built a home there. Even he can be referred as an exile when he came back to India. Incongruously, Raj Kumar returns to his own nation as a displaced man. His embraced country gives him a home and family, on the contrary, his home country takes away everyone from him. He returns to a life of uncertainty, insecurity and instability and is left with a sense of loss and hurt. A man with no home, no family to turn to.

As Dolly was also an orphan, she has no family other than the royal family and Outram House is the only life she knows. She shows most assertive attitude towards the place of exile. She asks Uma, "Where would I go, this is home?" (TGP, p.119). Dolly at first refuses to marry Raj Kumar because she fears another change of environment. At Ratnagiri she confesses to Uma, "I've lived here nearly twenty years, and this is home to me now." (GP 112) She doesn't want to go back

because, "If I went to Burma now I would be a foreigner – they would call me a "kalaa" like they do to Indians – a trespasser, an outsider from across the sea." (GP 113) Though Dolly was vacillated to go back to Rangoon, but once she reached there after her marriage with Raj Kumar, she was at ease with her new home in the form of Kemedine House.

In the same way, Manju has been projected by Ghosh as an absolutely typical Indian young girl. She was married to Neel and gave up all her higher aspirations. Like every normal girl she left her motherland and readily settled at her husband's home. At the time of arrival, she acknowledged, it was only now, circling above the city that was to be my home. She slipped her hand into his and looked down again on the great muddy river and the spire of gold. 'Yes, 'she said. 'I'm home' (p.301).

In *Sea of Poppies* home as a crucial aspect of displacement has well been convened. Regardless of the status quo at home, departing from home will always be hurting. This agony and feeling for home is dreadful in case of indentured labourers who are transported to foreign lands due to colonialism. Nostalgia and melancholy was felt by the indentured labourers while leaving their place. They are unable to leave their past as well as home because there are so many sweet memories associated with it, the memories of family, relatives and the time spent in the lap of their homeland.

The women at *Ibis* were also thinking about the trifling things that they will not be able to experience again in their life. Being far from those, such basic and ordinary activities also become significant and important.

Colour of poppies, spilling across the fields like abir on a rain-drenched Holi; the haunting smell of cooking-fires drifting across the river, bearing news of a wedding in a distance village; the sunset sounds of temple bells and the evening azan; late nights of the courtyards, listening to the tales of the elderly...(397).

Thus, it is well evident in *Sea of Poppies* that though the feeling of homelessness was among all the ejected persons on the ship yet they developed their own world. Amitav Ghosh projected them as characters adjusting to the new situation and readily developing their home away from home.

This notion or approach of Ghosh reveals his basic idea of contention that home is not located at the innate habitation only but it needs to be formed again in the process of adjustment of displacement, to combat the angst of diaspora. So his notion about the characters of his fiction world as 'disposed to routes and not the roots' is very much compatible with his concept of 'transnational home'. For him, the home can be relocated transnationally; beyond the home country or at different physical spaces. Thus, the journey of his novel's characters are not disposed to a simple journey away from home/family, but from one home/ family to another.

Language

Language becomes highly affected in case of displacement. In diasporic situation, it is important for an individual or group to understand the language that helps in better adjustment. The language of both, the diasporic community, as well as, the location where they moved is under influence. Dislocation may help to cultivate one's procreant capacity. Therefore, some Caribbean critics such as Wilson Harris and Edouad Glissant suggest: "dislocation is the key to a release of a distinctive form of cultural energy" (Ashcroft et al Key Concepts 74). Dislocation results in hybridity that also have the impact upon language. Dislocation may lead to evolution of language also. Because the words to describe the new place adequately cannot be found in the language brought with the early settlers, new terms must necessarily be invented.

Language as a diasporic component is copiously contemporaneous in *The Circle of Reason*. The diasporic resident of Lalpukur, from varied places, form a new vernacular to connect.

Ghosh with the help of the characters like Kulfi and Prof Samuel proposed that obliviousness of the language of the place, where you live can cause desolations. Both of them lost their jobs in an aliened land as they were not familiar with the language. Kulfi's case of losing job was completely a matter of misunderstanding of language and sign language and shows how cultural biasness and unawareness of language add miseries to dispora life. Professor Samuel also came across with the same plight of losing job and he was even arrested by the police. It was also an occurrence of bewilderment and cross cultural fissure. Their illiteracy and language barrier made the situation worse. The realities of diaspora experiences that express their fringe and susceptible condition in a changed social order is well revealed by these incidents.

This discussion clearly exemplifies that Ghosh has focused on the points like: language in case of displacement gets hybrid. And it is important for a person to understand the language of that place to get adjusted in a successful manner.

Use of language as a diasporic constituent has well been sculpted in *The Shadow Lines*. Longing for native language is as obvious as longing for home in diasporic situation. Shawkat Hussain points in his essay 'Post-Colonial Angst in Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*', "perhaps the greatest irony of independence of India for characters like Tha'mma is that while it gave them freedom and a new nation-state, the Partition took away their "homes" and the dialects that gave them their special identity" (127). It was not only the agony and painful feeling of partition that was exhibit in her behaviour but her longing for Dhakaeit dialect also found expression when her sister Maya, comes to Calcutta. In another description of impact of diaspora upon language, Ghosh took a very interesting example of Bengali words. The claim of anonymous narrator towards her grandmother concept of coming (aaschi) and going (jaaschi) is perplexing for him.

You see, in our family we don't know whether we are coming or going- It's all my grandmother's fault... But of course the fault was not hers at all: it lay in the language.

But interestingly, within this feature of the Bengali language lies a critique of the migration of populations during the Partition of 1947. The confusion over "aaschi" (coming) denotes the issues of partition. The fault therefore implicitly ignites the confusion of coming and going that there is in Tha'mma's world rather than in her language.

Language is a domineering manifestation in diasporic life of the characters of *The Glass Palace*. The various languages of associated places are deployed in copious ways in this novel. Various major characters of the novel are bi or multi-lingual. Linguistic resourcefulness of the characters is a major quality a diasporic individual consist.

Even Raj Kumar believes in retaining the old dialect to maintain old ties. Though English as an official language dominated that time yet Raj Kumar preferred to communicate in local languages, the terms peculiar to work situations, for example, from the teak camps and rubber plantations. This adaptation of language also contributed in his success as high percentage of labours were working in those camps.

In this novel, Language played a vital role in different situation. In her state of exile, The Burmese queen overtly used it as a weapon. Queen uses Hindustani to embarrass and intimidates Indian officials who are Parsi or Bengali it seemed to embarrass them that the queen of Burma could speak Hindustani better than they. (TGP: 109). Even Dinu also used the language as a weapon to communicate in code form.

The use of Hindi and Burmese word in the novel supports the theme of dislocation. Hybridity of language refers to the consequences of displacement that leads to chutnification of language. In this novel, Ghosh has abundantly used Chutnified language. The major events of the novel take place in Burma, Malaya and India. Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies* can be referred as the bizarre of Multicultural and Multilingual Narrative. The language style of the novel in the beginning is having quite perplexing impact on the reader which steadily turns into an opulent and stirring mix of languages. The purpose of the using so many languages and dialects lies in painting the full range of diversity on board. The ship carries the people of different class, caste, nationality or religion, the words, dialect or language of different places have been used by Ghosh to project their individuality.

In *Sea of Poppies* different characters from different places and cultures assembles. Even the places of concern for the novel like Calcutta and Ibis belong to multi-lingual communities, where people speak pidgin, Bhojpuri and mangled English Bengali. To explore the true spirit of the vividness it was required to adopt variety of expression with different languages. This has been delineated by O.P. Dwivedi in *The fiction of Amitav Ghosh: An assessment*

Language plays a pivotal role to bring every character in Ghosh's book alive- whether it's the Bhojpuri of Deeti, a woman married to an *afimkhor* in Ghazipur, the chameleon like language of the han solo-ish Zachary Reid, an American whose mixed descent makes him 'Go East' and join *Ibis* crew; or the Bengali of the humiliated and tragic Raja Neel Rattan Halder of Raskhali; or the rascallion hobson-jobson of merchant- nabobe like Burnham.

O.P. Dwivedi in his book described Ghosh use of language, "By the tool of language, Ghosh attempts to leave a deeper impact on the readers as well as exhibits his wide and in-depth knowledge." Thus, Amitav Ghosh has projected the consequences of displacement on language. Ghosh marked language as the diasporic constituent and denoted its use with the characters of his novels.

Border

Terrestrial region separating two places is referred as border. Borders are not any physical phenomenon but an abstract one and lies either on the maps or in the mind of the people separated by those borders. Sometimes, the concept of borders become so critical that it becomes the matter of conflict arising several issues.

Ghosh believes in arbitrariness of border. The characters of his novels well divulge the anguish and pain instigated by the borders that exhibits as if these borders are porous. Apart from physical borders, these constituents in the form of abstract borders are discussed by Ghosh. These abstract borders act on the human psyche and are evident in the form of torment and exploitation based on culture, religion, caste and language. *Diasporic Identities and Empire: Cultural Contentions and Literary Landscapes* edited by David Brooks also mentioned, "It is these borders, this concept of boundary making created by the west, which are the root cause for all riots in the name of religion, ethnicity, culture, language and politics."

The book, *Circle of Reason* highlights the quandary and social condition of people that are affected and victims of the separation when they are forced to cross the border. *Narrative Techniques of Amitav Ghosh's The Circle of Reason* by V. S Sankara Rao Chinnam narrated it as:

In this novel, Ghosh shows his involvement with the idea of the border and crossing of the border. In Ghosh's world-view all such borders that is in and attempt to define us should be challenged – be they political, cultural, linguistic, racial, communal, spatial or even temporal. All these borders are constructs and meant for crossing. (29)

Even the village Lalpukur, itself is the border village. The people of Lalpukur were mostly migrated refugees. They all were from different places so they don't have any feeling for border or native land, they most of the time recall their old life.

In *The Shadow Lines* Amitav Ghosh has projected the perspectives of borders by three characters belonging to three adjoining generations, Tha'mma, the protagonist's grandmother; her uncle, Jethamoshai; and the third by Robi, Tha'mma's nephew. All the three have different notions and complicity regarding border.

The characterisation of grandmother is done in such a manner as to highlight this condition of the refugees. Tha'mma in *The Shadow Lines* inquires whether she would be able to see the boundary between India and East Pakistan. She was baffled with the need of Partition. Ghosh writes through this character:

And if there is no difference both side will be the same, it will be just like it used to catch a train in Dhaka and get off in Calcutta next day without anybody stopping us. What was it all for then? Partition and all the killing and everything – if there is not something in between. (SL: 151)

Even senile old Jethamoshai, uncle of Tha'mma also reflects the nuances associated with the borders. He provides a very true and refreshing perspective towards the triviality of Partition. Jethamoshai believed in one's sense of belonging to the place of birth where they lived. For him borders were nothing and that is reflected through the tone of finality in his concluding remark. His statement came to be true in the form of Bangladesh partition.

Robi, the uncle of narrator, also shares and echoed the same view as of Jethamoshai, fifteen years after he heard it spoken out. At that time, mere a boy then; fifteen years later, while he shared his views on riots with the narrator, with first-hand knowledge of many riots and communal disturbances, being an IAS officer. Robi's views on the whole issue of borders and nationhood is more philosophical and mature than his elders.

The Shadow Lines in his theme, questions the concept of the border. It interrogates the validity of the borders drawn between two nations or is an absurd illusion. It is Ghosh's argument in this novel that borders themselves are fictitious and deceptive, that they conquest and contradict the very reason behind their superficial reality.

The insignificance of Border and its dreadful impact and the vainness of marking boundary lines are foregrounded in his novels. Many philanthropist in the world has raised the issues associated with border. Ghosh, with the help of his characters attempts to draw a solution to this.

Nation

The concept of nation is much debatable and caters lot of importance and has become antagonistic also. Encyclopaedia America defines nation as "a large number of people who see themselves as a community or group and who generally place loyalty to the group above any conflicting loyalties. They often share one or more of the following: language, culture, religion and political and other institutions, a history with which they identify and a belief in a common destiny" (750). This model of nation worked well for constructing a sense of solidarity and a goal for fighting in the anti-

colonial movements. In his *Imagined Communities*, Anderson (1983) calls a nation an “imagined political community,” because members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.

In many of his novels, Ghosh has dealt with and elevated a query about nation and nationality of individual. In case of displacement, an individual is far from its nation and culture, so sustaining links with the nation is a challenging task. And again, in case of long time displacement, people find it difficult to get adjusted with its own country and in the same way, it would be difficult for the country men to accept the diasporic individual in some instances.

In *The Circle of Reason*, Ghosh deals with the several nations and persons from different nationalities. The novel covers the partition of Bangladesh (East Pakistan) from Pakistan. The people of the village are the residents of East Pakistan. The partition between the nations somehow displaces them from their country of origin, makes their life uncertain and susceptible placing them within the term ‘refugee’. This state of ‘Refugeeism’ and the present condition of the people of Lalpukur compels them to question the meaning and significance of nationality and how it disturbs the psychology of mass migrants.

The character of the novel, Mrs Verma, in Algeria, has a feeling for nation and the tradition of India. She convinced Dr Mishra for the proper Indian cremation of Kulfi and put all her efforts to make it in the proper manner. The character of Mrs Verma has been depicted as the true nationalist.

The concept of nation in the characters of the novel has been truly traumatized in *The Shadow Lines*. The various characters of the novel have different notions about the nation and they have their own way of defining it. This notion of nation is so much mystified because of the partition and movement of people from one nation to another.

Tha'mma as a ‘fossilized specimen of nationalism’ is the fatal victim of the partition of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. She spurs an anti-colonial nationalism and think about the place which has no limitations and constrictions. Tha'mma is rigid about her nationality and is still trapped in her pre-national spatial identity’ (Anjali, 2003). She cannot understand why her place of birth has come “to be messily at odds with her nationality. On the contrary, Tridib is a cosmopolitan. He is ‘happiest in neutral, impersonal places---coffee houses, bars, street corner adda –the sort of place where people come, talk and go away without expecting to know each other any further’(9). Tridib likes the story of ‘a man without a country, who fell in love with a woman across-the seas’ (186). Even his love knows no boundary and stretched out to England. Ila’s attraction towards England, the other nation, and repulsion towards India, her nation, is well evident though her depicted behaviour. Ila chose to be engrossed into the life pattern, morality and ethics of that foreign land. Ila wants to be freed from social constrictions of India. This symbolic displacement of Ila only takes away her sense of belonging. She could not adjust to the adopted nation as well as become foreigner in her own nation.

The concept of nation is bewildered and deconstructed in *The Glass Palace*. Nation not only represents its residents but is a by-product of several histories, customs and codes. Amitav Ghosh questioned the concept of nation that weighs the legitimacy of this concept. The novel approaches the colonial, postcolonial and neo-colonial aspects of India and Burma. The characters of the novel frequently move from one country to another, as an outcome of hybridized phenomenon and an image of melted culture. They have different ideologies towards the term nation that exhibits the fragility of the concept of nation.

The characters of *The Glass Palace* are mostly trans-national. This Trans nationality allow them to move simply from one country to another, having no profound concerns about own nation. In the book, *Post liberalization Indian Novels in English: Politics of Global Reception* edited by Ayesha Iqbal Vishwamohan mentioned:

Raj Kumar is a true multicultural. He is a re-invented migrant and his story is another of Ghosh's examples of how to address the problems of settling and resettling communities and individuals amidst the confluence of nations and nationalities, who are able to gather in the half-light of foreign tongues the signs of approval and acceptance. While barriers and boundaries seem to define the psyches that attend the making of nations and nationalities in *The Glass Palace*.

Queen Supalyat never came out of the glory of its nation and made sure that the customs of her own nation is being followed in Outram House. At the condition of distorted house of Ratnagiri, she praises Burma and says

Yes, look around you, look at how we live. Yes, we who ruled the richest land in Asia are now reduced to this. This is what they have done to us, this is what they will do to all of Burma. (88)

Nation for Hardy also becomes important when Arjun and Hardy are in the jungles of Malaya fighting against Japan. It was Hardy, who first quit from British army not to give support to Japan but to get rid from Britishers. Hardy, as an Indian, wants to get rid from Britishers.

This novel covers the concept of nation for displaced in different ways. For Raj Kumar adopted or migrated nation is everything that give him all the happiness. On the contrary, Thebaw and Supalayat can never come out of the memories of their nation. Even Hardy and Arjun also felt for the nation.

In order to construct community out of variance, to convert 'many' into 'one', Bhabha categorize the nationalist discourse that engages two contradictory modes of representation, the 'pedagogic' and the 'performative.' On the one hand, nationalism is a pedagogic discourse. 'It claims a fixed origin for the nation and asserts a sense of a continuous history'. It is 'pedagogical', because it is inflected by the authority, legitimacy and primacy of the nation as the central political and social unit which collects a population into a 'people'. The people thus constitute the object of pedagogical discourse.

Thus a close association among the people of same nationality during migration and displacement cannot be overlooked. They have no choice over their condition but are pushed out of their country into a new, foreign and unknown land. Thus changing Ibis as an open cultural site signifying hybridity and fluidity of movement characterized by heterogeneity as the nation.

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